

## Meditation #22: The Holy Family Today

### *What does it say?*

STUDY: Ephesians 3:14-21

GOLDEN TEXT: Ephesians 3:14 through 16 = *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit.*

### *What does it mean?*

The Holy Family at Christmas was only the beginning of renewed relationships. The Apostle Paul is especially eloquent here concerning the enduring presence of the Father and our empowerment from the Holy Spirit to sustain the continuing work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of God the Father and his love in us are totally beyond measure. Therefore, we have limitless, renewable resources of love to care for God's creation—including especially other people and ourselves. (See Ephesians 3:17-21.)

1. How does every family have one Father? Is this truth hard to believe? Is the human family healthy or dysfunctional? Why? What part do you play?
2. “*For this reason*” goes back to Ephesians 3:1, and is based on the end of Ephesians 2 where the Apostle Paul describes the fact that the fellowship of believers is being “*built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.*” Is this dwelling place for Sunday meetings only? Are we God's dwelling place other days of the week, too?
3. Why does the Apostle Paul want us to “*know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge*”? (Ephesians 3:19) Is that intellectual knowledge or active knowledge? Is the “love of Christ” his love for us or our love for him? Or both?
4. How can we be “*filled with all the fullness of God*”? (Ephesians 3:19) Is no aspect of God missing? Is this full “family” membership? Can this presence truly fill every part of us? Is this how he can “*accomplish in us more than we are able to ask or think*”? (Ephesians 3:20) Does our heavenly Father's inspiration include responsible creation-care?

### *What are we going to do about it?*

5. If we all have one Father, what is our relationship with people in the more ecologically stressed areas of the world? What should we do to show that we get the point of the Family? Can we deplete and pollute less? Can we encourage and empower more?
6. How is the Father honored when so many of his children are in danger? What if the way we pollute and deplete the creation makes other children of his suffer more? What does the Father expect us to do? Must we wait for him to tell us?
7. How does the fullness of God inside of us (Ephesians 3:19) want us to take care of his other children? And take responsibility for his creation? Could our loving care for other people and for the creation reach beyond what we can now ask or think? (Ephesians 3:20)

**Truth To Celebrate:** *The human family is real, through the active leadership and presence of the Father, the Creator of all, who cares that we treat one another and his creation, with love.*

**Advent-Action:** *Water is precious and “the world is waiting,” so take shorter showers. Get wet; suds up; rinse off. When you use less water and energy, the rest of your human family benefits.*

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